

2004

Cumberland County

Environmental Health Assessment

And

Improvement Plan

Prepared: September 2003

The Plan:

The Cumberland County Health Department (CCHD) is an established health department and also an established Board of Health pursuant the authority of NJSA 26:3A et seq. CCHD is the certified local health agency for the provision of environmental health services delegated by the County Environmental Health Act (CEHA) and the Environmental Health Standards of Administrative Procedure; NJAC 7:1H – 2.1 et seq.

The City of Vineland also has an established health department (VHD) for the provisions of health services to the residents of Vineland. CCHD has entered into a full subcontractor agreement with the City of Vineland for the provisions of environmental health services within the City of Vineland.

CCHD has entered into a certified inter-local service agreement with the City of Vineland for the provision of Hazardous Materials Emergency Response service throughout the County of Cumberland.

CCHD has entered into a certified subcontractor agreement with the Cumberland County Improvement Authority (CCIA) for the provisions of Solid Waste Enforcement within the County of Cumberland, excluding the City of Vineland.

This plan incorporates the goals established in the 1998-2001 NJDEP Strategic Plan. It defines health concerns related to environmental issues. It assesses Cumberland County's initiatives and outcomes as related to these goals. And it outlines a plan for improvement in an attempt to reach several milestones.

The goals included in this plan are:

- 1- Clean Air
- 2- Clean and Plentiful Water
- 3- Safe and Healthy Communities
- 4- Open and Effective Government

Community Background:

Bordering the Delaware Bay in the southern extremity of New Jersey, Cumberland County is comprised of 501.7 square miles and has a population of 146,438 people. There are 14 municipalities, three of which are considered to be urban areas. The urban areas, Bridgeton, Millville and Vineland contain 72.3% of the county's population. The remaining areas of the County are rural. Fifteen percent of the County's area is considered wetlands and 37% falls under the provisions of the New Jersey Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA).

Industries in Cumberland County consist primarily of agriculture, food processing, textiles and sand and gravel mining.

Local Environmental Issues:

Over 25% of Cumberland County residents are in rural areas that utilize private wells for their drinking water. There is a concern with private well drinking water quality as well as public non-community water system drinking water quality. Continued studies conducted by the NJDEP are showing the presence of several drinking water contaminants. Among these contaminants are mercury, gross alpha, 1,2,3 trichloropropane and 1,2 dichloropropane. The CCHD will be working with the NJDEP and local communities to provide education and well water testing and treatment information for affected area residents.

As a leading agricultural community Cumberland County has several migrant labor camps. CCHD participates with the EPA and NJDEP in the migrant labor camp drinking water monitoring program. This program assures safe drinking water to the transient migrant community.

Continuing our effort to evaluate possible areas of groundwater contamination, the CCHD anticipates ongoing participation in the Underground Storage Tank Pilot Project. Routine inspection of facilities with registered USTs will allow environmental officials to monitor tanks for leaking product that has the potential to contaminate drinking water.

As a large farming area it has become beneficial for some growers to land apply various waste products. Through investigation we have determined that some products must have NJDEP approval for application while others need no approvals. The number of farms land applying food processing residuals has increased annually. The health department has received an increase in the number of odor and fly complaints. Under the Right to Farm Act these activities cannot be deemed as “creating a nuisance” and are exempt from NJDEP odor enforcement. We are faced with the task of working with the various farmers, residents and agencies to best manage these conditions.

The environmental response to bio-terrorism threats and incidents is an ongoing concern. While a majority of these calls center around public health, it is the environmental first responders that are on the front line. CCHD’s subcontract with the City of Vineland allows for access to the Vineland Haz-Mat Team. CCHD has been working closely with County Office of Emergency Management, haz-mat and local law enforcement to coordinate and effectively respond to hazardous material calls. We anticipate expanding our preparedness in the upcoming years.

Strategic Goals and Activities:

Cumberland County's Environmental Assessment and Improvement Plan places local environmental concerns within the context of the Strategic Goals set forth by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Cumberland County Health Department will respond to these goals pursuant to the authority delegated to CCHD through the NJDEP and CEHA.

Goal: Clean Air

The air throughout the County will be healthful to breathe, and air pollutants will not damage our forests, land and water bodies.

Milestone: By 2007, air throughout the County will meet national Clean Air Act standards for ozone and other air pollutants.

Activities: Inspect minor and B source air permitted facilities to determine compliance with the State's air pollution control regulations. Emphasis will be placed on gas stations that have not been inspected in 4 or more years

Conduct inspections at potential facilities that may require air permits as needed.

Conduct odor and emission complaint investigations received from citizens and NJDEP. Implement actions to have the source of the complaints corrected.

Deliverables: Submit all compliance monitoring inspection reports to NJDEP's Minor Source Compliance Investigation Program within 60 days of completing the inspection.

Notify NJDEP of enforcement actions and forward all enforcement records according to NJDEP protocols.

Resources: CCHD employs 6 full-time Registered Environmental Health Specialists. One inspector is trained in B source inspections. One person is trained in odor enforcement.

CCHD maintains an agreement with VHD for assistance in any visual emission complaints that we may receive. VHD has 2 certified REHS.

Vehicles are available to staff for travel to and from inspection sites.

Computers with internet connections are available for all staff.

Goal: Clean and Plentiful Water

Cumberland County's rivers, lakes and coastal waters will be fishable, swimmable and support healthy ecosystems. Surface and groundwater will be clean sources of water. Every person will have safe drinking water. Adequate quantities of surface and ground water will be available for all uses.

Milestone: 95 percent of the public non-community water systems will provide water that meets chemical and microbiological drinking water standards.

Activities: Inspect non-transient PNC systems at least every two years and transient PNC systems at least every four years.

Continue to implement the NJDEP Zero Tolerance Policy for PNC systems found in violation. Periodically review the NJDEP public water database (PWS) to determine if any PNC systems have failed to sample as required. Undertake enforcement action to return violators to compliance. Provide correct updated information on PNC system status to NJDEP

If funded, continue to collect drinking water samples at migrant farm camp wells. Both pre and mid season samples will be collected and analyzed for bacteria, nitrate and chlorine residual. If exceedances in drinking water standards are identified, appropriate compliance and enforcement activities will be taken to assure a safe drinking water supply.

Deliverables: Submit all compliance monitoring inspection reports to NJDEP Bureau of Safe Drinking Water.

Notify NJDEP of enforcement actions and forward all enforcement records according to NJDEP protocols including Notice of Violation/Offer of Settlement policies.

Report findings of migrant farm camp well samples to USEPA and USDOL at the conclusion of the season.

Resources: One REHS is trained in facility inspections and zero tolerance policies. Staff has received additional training in water treatment options and capacity development inspections. CCHD works closely with the local laboratories to receive up to date sampling results and assure timely sampling for registered facilities. Penalties are deposited into the CCHD EQEF. No inter-local service agreements are in place for this program.

A computer with an internal modem is provided for connection to the PWS database. Vehicles are available for travel to and from inspection sites.

Milestone: **By 2005, 50% of assessed non-tidal river miles will support healthy, sustainable biological**

Activities: Continue to collect surface water samples at the NJDEP selected ambient surface water stations at a frequency of 5 samples over a 30-day period. Samples will be delivered to the DHSS courier for transport to DHSS lab.

Resources: CCHD utilizes temporary summer help trained in the collection of water samples for this program.
CCHD is a DHSS courier site.
Vehicles are available for travel to and from sampling sites.

Milestone: **Control pollution emitted to the waters of the State.**

Investigate all water pollution complaints received by citizens and the NJDEP. Implement actions to have the source of the complaints corrected.

Maintain files and notify NJDEP of all enforcement actions taken.

Resources: 6 Registered Environmental Health Specialists cover the various municipalities in Cumberland County and respond to water pollution complaints when received.

Vehicles and computers are available for travel and data management.

Milestone: **By 2005, 100 percent of New Jersey's recreational beaches will be safe for bathing.**

Activities: Assure that recreational beach monitoring is performed. Perform pollution source investigations.

Each season compile, from all municipalities within the county, the list of recreational bathing areas on lakes or streams, bacteriological sampling results, and the number of beach closings due to water quality impairments.

Deliverables: At the end of the season, submit recreational beach water monitoring results electronically to the NJDEP.

Resources: CCHD employs a full time REHS trained to perform sanitary surveys of beaches. Additionally a summer public health investigator will be trained to conduct water monitoring and follow-up.

A computer, with Microsoft Excel software and an internet connection is available for electronic submission of sample results.

Goal: Safe and Health Communities

Every Cumberland County Community will be free from unacceptable human health and ecological risks due to direct exposure from hazardous substances and other potentially harmful agents. Natural resources will be managed to protect the public from floods, fires and storms.

Milestone: Exposure to environmental risks will be controlled and minimized.

Site Remediation Program

Activities: Assure response to all hazardous materials emergencies referred by NJDEP to assess environmental health threats and advise hazardous materials response units accordingly. Make recommendations to and coordinated these response actions with appropriate federal, state and local agencies. Ensure that personnel assigned to respond to hazmat incidents are properly trained and participating in a medical surveillance program.

Investigate hazardous materials complaints received from citizens and NJDEP. Refer cases requiring remedial action to NJDEP.

Participate in a pilot project to conduct comprehensive inspections of regulated underground storage tanks (USTs) to determine compliance status. Reinspect regulated USTs every three years.

Deliverables: Prepare reports of all hazardous materials responses. Submit to NJDEP proof of meeting POSHA health and safety training requirements.

Follow NJDEP protocols and guidelines for UST inspections. Submit inspection reports as required to NJDEP.

Resources: CCHD maintains a subcontractor agreement with VHD for hazardous materials response. CCHD conducts haz-mat investigations and clean-up monitoring.

CCHD employs 5 REHS' that are trained in first response and one REHS that is trained to the technician level. CCHD and VHD maintain a 24/7 on call system. On call personnel are equipped with a Nextel phone that is part of the NJDHSS LINKS Communication System.

A vehicle is supplied for response to incidents.

Solid Waste Program

Milestone: **To achieve and maintain the safe management of wastes in an environmentally sound manner.**

Activities: Continue to investigate all solid waste complaints received from citizens and NJDEP.

Conduct routine compliance monitoring inspections of Class A, B, & C recycling facilities, convenience centers and farmland mulch sites. Continue to update the list of these sites and provide to NJDEP. As requested, conduct inspections of contaminated soil sites.

Continue to monitor solid waste haulers to ensure compliance with the Solid Waste Management Act, and conduct interviews of transporters referred by NJDEP.

Continue compliance monitoring inspection of all other delegated solid waste facilities.

Monitor storage of scrap tires in accordance with the Solid Waste Regulations. Take enforcement actions as required.

Identify the precise location of all solid waste facilities with GPS.

Perform recycling investigations and complete general recycling questionnaires at various regulated facilities.

Deliverables: Enforce the State Solid Waste Management Act and initiate enforcement proceedings pursuant to NJDEP guidelines.

Submit 1/4ly, the list of solid waste facilities inspected.

Notify NJDEP of enforcement actions according to policy.

Resources: CCHD maintains a subcontractor agreement with the CCIA for solid waste enforcement. Two full time investigators work in this program.

A vehicle, surveillance and photography equipment is available for all field inspections.

Noise Control

Milestone: Control noise that unnecessarily degrades the quality of life and/or affects the health and safety of people in Salem County.

Activities: Investigate noise complaints received from citizens and the NJDEP that are under the jurisdiction of the Noise Control Regulations, and if applicable, enforce those regulations to achieve compliance.

As requested by local officials and others provide guidance on noise regulations and noise prevention and abatement.

Deliverables: Maintain records of all complaint investigations.

Maintain current staff certifications for noise control programs.

Resources: CCHD employs 1 REHS who is certified in noise complaint investigation. CCHD maintains a quest sound meter to be used for noise complaint investigations.

A vehicle is available for response to complaints.

Goal: Open and Effective Government

The department will fulfill its vision and mission and achieve its goals through the involvement of citizens and stakeholders as critical partners and through the commitment to quality principles and methods as a means to continuous improvement of its operations.

Activities: Encourage and develop strategic partnerships with other local, state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, environmental commissions, the general public and the business community to address environmental issues and concerns.

Provide education and outreach as well as environmental data to community groups.

Deliverables: CCHD will continue its relationship with Salem County Health Department concerning shared services for a Health Officer and an Environmental Coordinator.

CCHD will continue its agreement with the VHD concerning response to hazardous material incidents.

CCHD will continue its agreement with CCIA for solid waste enforcement and with the Cumberland County Planning Office for GIS services.

CCHD has formed a task group with the CCOEM, local hospitals, County Prosecutor's Office, the local police and Salem County Emergency Agencies to work on bioterrorism response.

CCHD will continue to work with local water testing laboratories in order to better serve the public and business in the community concerning water testing guidelines and requirements.

CCHD will hold town meetings and work with local governments in communities that have special environmental concerns.

CCHD will continue to provide outreach and education on environmental issues to the effected communities.

Emerging Environmental Issues

The Private Well Testing Act has had extensive impact on the operation of Cumberland County's Water Program. This Act serves as a mechanism to legally notify CCHD of private wells that do not pass the Safe Drinking Water Act Standards. While the Act does not officially require follow-up enforcement by the local authority, CCHD would be remiss not to respond to a notification of unsafe drinking water. The additional manpower to adequately address this program is approximately 1/2 FTE.

The threat of bio-terrorism and the associated need to incorporate planning and training for such an event has put an increased demand on personnel issues for first response. Because it is unknown what effect these incidents may have on the environment, continued monitoring of state and federal policies will be performed.

Cumberland County Health Department will continue to strengthen its infrastructure and to build partnerships with other government and non-governmental agencies in order to effectively and efficiently serve the citizens of the County.